

AUSA: Joseph H. Rosenberg

24 Mag. 3597

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

v.

JEISON LEBRON and
ARTURO RODRIGO TERRERO-BARISTA,

Defendants.

COMPLAINT

Violation of 21 U.S.C. § 846

COUNTY OF OFFENSE:
MANHATTAN

SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK:

HUNTER SCHMITZ, being duly sworn, deposes and says that he is a Special Agent with the Drug Enforcement Administration ("DEA"), and charges as follows:

COUNT ONE
(Conspiracy to Distribute Narcotics)

1. From at least in or about September 2023 through on or about October 9, 2024, in the Southern District of New York and elsewhere, JEISON LEBRON and ARTURO RODRIGO TERRERO-BARISTA, the defendants, and others known and unknown, knowingly and intentionally combined, conspired, confederated, and agreed together and with each other to violate the narcotics laws of the United States.

2. It was a part and an object of the conspiracy that JEISON LEBRON and ARTURO RODRIGO TERRERO-BARISTA, the defendants, and others known and unknown, would and did distribute and possess with intent to distribute a controlled substance, in violation of Title 21, United States Code, Section 841(a)(1).

3. The controlled substance involved in the offense was 500 grams and more of mixtures and substances containing a detectable amount of methamphetamine, its salts, isomers, and salts of its isomers, in violation of Title 21, United States Code, Section 841(b)(1)(A).

(Title 21, United States Code, Section 846.)

The bases for my knowledge and for the foregoing charges are, in part, as follows:

4. I am a Special Agent with DEA, currently assigned to the El Dorado Task Force, which focuses on combatting drug trafficking and money laundering. I have been a Special Agent with DEA for approximately one and a half years. I have been personally involved in this investigation. This affidavit is based on my involvement in this investigation, my conversations with other law enforcement officers and other individuals, and my examination of reports and records. Because this affidavit is being submitted for the limited purpose of establishing probable cause, it does not include all the facts that I have learned during the course of my investigation. Where the contents of documents and the actions, statements, and conversations of others are reported herein, they are reported in substance and in part, except where otherwise indicated.

Background

5. Since at least in or about September 2023, members of law enforcement have been investigating a network of drug traffickers who, among other things, appear to have converted the basement of a residential home in Ridgefield, New Jersey, into a large-scale pill pressing and narcotics packaging operation (the “New Jersey Mill”). In particular, the traffickers are suspected of using the New Jersey Mill to store large quantities of methamphetamine and potentially other narcotics, combining those narcotics with other fillers, using dyes to color the combined powders, and using a large industrial-scale pill press to create at least tens of thousands of pills containing narcotics. The traffickers also appear to have been using a particular apartment in Manhattan (the “New York Stash House”) as a storage location for the pills that they press in the New Jersey Mill.

The Searches of the New Jersey Mill and the New York Stash House

6. Based on my participation in this investigation and conversations I have had with other law enforcement officers, I know the following:

a. On or about October 9, 2024, law enforcement officers searched the New Jersey Mill pursuant to a judicially authorized search warrant. During that search, law enforcement officers found large quantities of narcotics as well as the materials and equipment necessary to press the narcotics into pill form for further distribution. In other words, law enforcement discovered evidence consistent with the New Jersey Mill’s being used as a pill mill.

b. In the basement of the New Jersey Mill, law enforcement found, among other things: (1) a black, plastic storage box containing approximately nine bags of blue pills (**Image 1**) a subset of which field tested positive for methamphetamine; (2) approximately one pound of a white powdery substance that field tested positive for methamphetamine; (3) dyes of many different colors; and (4) an industrial-scale pill press (**Image 2**). The room in which the pill press was found appeared to have coverings on the walls consistent with an attempt to soundproof the room.

**Image 1****Image 2**

c. Inside a bedroom on the first floor of the New Jersey Mill, in which JEISON LEBRON, the defendant, was found sleeping, law enforcement found approximately \$6,885 inside a dresser drawer. Based on my training and experience, I know that narcotics traffickers are typically paid for their illegal product in cash because it is harder to trace and often maintain on hand, at their home and/or business residence, large amounts of U.S. currency in order to maintain and finance their narcotics trafficking.

d. On the kitchen counter on the first floor of the New Jersey Mill, law enforcement found a piece of mail that had been sent by a particular internet service provider. Even though the mail was found in the New Jersey Mill, it appeared to have been mailed to the New York Stash House.

e. On or about October 9, 2024, law enforcement officers searched the New York Stash House pursuant to a judicially authorized search warrant. During that search, law enforcement found large quantities of narcotics—evidence consistent with the New York Stash House's being used as a stash location. Most notably, in a closet across the hall from one of the bedrooms in the New York Stash House, law enforcement officers found approximately tens of thousands of multicolored pills that field tested positive for methamphetamine, secreted away inside a shoebox and inside brown paper bags that were themselves hidden inside dark-colored shopping bags.

f. In total, during the October 9, 2024 searches of the New Jersey Mill and the New York Stash House, law enforcement discovered, among other things, approximately tens of thousands of pills, some of which field tested positive for methamphetamine; approximately one pound of a white powdery substance that field tested positive for methamphetamine; and approximately \$6,885 in cash (**Image 3**).



Image 3

The Defendants

7. Based on my participation in this investigation, my conversations with other law enforcement officers, and my review of reports and records, I have learned the following:

a. At the time law enforcement officers searched the New Jersey Mill, both JEISON LEBRON and ARTURO RODRIGO TERRERO-BARISTA, the defendants, were present. The defendants were sleeping in separate bedrooms on the first floor.

b. On several occasions between in or about August and October 2024, TERRERO-BARISTA has appeared to leave the New Jersey Mill late in the evening carrying a bag, travel to the New York Stash House for a brief period, return to the vicinity of the New Jersey Mill, and then get picked up by LEBRON before returning to the New Jersey Mill, either with a different bag or no bag at all. Based on my training and experience and my participation in this investigation, this pattern is consistent with the defendants' using the New Jersey Mill as a pill mill and the New York Stash House as a stash location.

c. For example, based on my review of pole camera footage, drop car footage, and records obtained from wireless service providers, I have learned that, on or about August 29, 2024, at approximately 1:20 a.m., an individual I believe appears to be TERRERO-BARISTA left the New Jersey Mill, carrying a bag with a long strap, and got into an unknown vehicle that I believe to be a taxi. Shortly thereafter, at approximately 1:38 a.m., TERRERO-BARISTA arrived at the building in which the New York Stash House is located (the "Building") in the same vehicle in which he had left the New Jersey Mill, carrying what appeared to be the same bag, and walked inside the Building.

d. At approximately the same time, based on my review of pole camera footage, drop car footage, records obtained from wireless service providers, and records from the Building's management company, I know that a key fob linked to the New York Stash House was used at the front door of the Building. At approximately 1:54 a.m., TERRERO-BARISTA exited the Building with a different bag than the one TERRERO-BARISTA had when he arrived. TERRERO-BARISTA then got into an unidentified car that I also believe to be a taxi. At

approximately 3:20 a.m., an individual I believe to be LEBRON departed from the New Jersey Mill in a particular car. When that car returned to the New Jersey Mill at approximately 3:42 a.m., both LEBRON and TERRERO-BARISTA got out of the car, and TERRERO-BARISTA was carrying what appeared to be the same bag that TERRERO-BARISTA had been carrying when he departed the Building approximately two hours earlier.¹

e. As another example, on or about October 8, 2024, the day before the New Jersey Mill and the New York Stash House were searched by law enforcement, at approximately 7:20 p.m., law enforcement observed an individual I believe to be TERRERO-BARISTA exit the New Jersey Mill, carrying what appeared to be a dark shopping bag. At approximately 8:45 p.m., an individual I believe to be LEBRON departed the New Jersey Mill in a particular car (the “October 8 Car”), and returned to the New Jersey Mill approximately 40 minutes later. At that time, individuals that I believe to be TERRERO-BARISTA and LEBRON got out of the October 8 Car, and TERRERO-BARISTA was no longer carrying a dark shopping bag. Early the next morning, on or about October 9, 2024, which was the same day on which law enforcement searched the New Jersey Mill and the New York Stash House, a similar trip occurred: TERRERO-BARISTA left the New Jersey Mill at approximately 12:48 a.m. carrying a dark bag; at approximately 2:25 a.m., LEBRON left the New Jersey Mill in the October 8 Car; at approximately 3:20 a.m., the October 8 Car returned to the New Jersey Mill with both LEBRON and TERRERO-BARISTA inside of it; and when he exited the October 8 Car, TERRERO-BARISTA no longer appeared to be carrying a dark shopping bag. At approximately 10:10 a.m., law enforcement entered the New Jersey Mill and found TERRERO-BARISTA and LEBRON inside.

WHEREFORE, I respectfully request that JEISON LEBRON and ARTURO RODRIGO TERRERO-BARISTA, the defendants, be imprisoned or bailed, as the case may be.

S/ by the Court with permission
 HUNTER SCHMITZ
 Special Agent
 Drug Enforcement Administration

Sworn to before me on this 10th day of October 2024.


 HONORABLE ROBERT W. LEHRBURGER
 United States Magistrate Judge
 Southern District of New York

¹ In my affidavit submitted in support of the Government’s application to obtain warrants to search the New Jersey Mill and the New York Stash House, I stated that the individual whom I believed picked up TERRERO-BARISTA at approximately 3:20 a.m. appeared to be someone other than LEBRON. I now believe that it was LEBRON—who looks like that other individual—who picked up TERRERO-BARISTA at approximately 3:20 a.m.